

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, January 26. 1712.

I Am happily stop'd in what I was going to say, relating to the farther Arguements against the Suggestion, that the Government having already made a Peace with France, by her Majesty adding a farther Assurance to the Thing itself in her late Message: I had been Arguing about the Mocking of God, in appointing the late Fast

— And I was going to Argue the Folly of Attempting to banter the Allies, by the same Thing, and in such a manner; How easily it would be discover'd by them, and how much it would lessen and expose the British Coast, and Counsels, when it should come out; But the Thing is at an End; the

Queen has not only positively assur'd us, that all these Reports have been GROUNDED LESS, but has promis'd to lay before the Houses of Parliament the several Steps taken therein, as they go on — Certainly we shall now have an End of the Surmises, and People may be content to stay till these several Steps come to appear.

It cannot be amiss to observe something of what is also hinted at, in her Majesty's said Message, about confining the French to a Time, in which, if they do not think fit to comply with the Conditions of Peace which the Allies shall insist upon as satisfactory, the Treaty shall break up.

Nothing

Nothing has been more usual in such Cases, than for the French to spin out their Treaties in length, hoping always to amuse, divide, and perplex the Allies with their Dexterous Management of such Negotiations; but I must own, the tying them down to a Day positive, when if they do not sign the Treaty, farther Conditions shall be Demanded, or the Confederates not esteem themselves bound by their other Demands, or the Treaty to dissolve: I am persuaded the French will not run the Risque of passing those Limits — The Case to me seems clear, from this that follows; In those Treaties where the French spun out the Time, they were always growing in Success in the Field, and the Accounts of their New Conquests coming every Day into the Congress, gave them always a handle to raise the Price of their Favours, and make New Demands; but now the Case is alter'd, now they stand upon another Foot; they are as much afraid of another Campaign now, as the Spaniards and Dutch were then; and as they can expect no Cessation of Arms, they will, if possible, shun the Hazard of the Operations of War.

This brings me back to what I offer'd before, that a firm and fixt Agreement among all the Allies, of what they shall or shall not quit, demand, and insist upon, with good Reasons for those Demands, and a short Day for the French to come to a Conclusion OF OR ON — Will certainly produce a Good Peace; and without such a Concert, if Jealousie of one another, private Leagues against one another; secret Caballings to get more on this Hand, and prevent getting enough on that; if these Things creep in among the Confederates, they will break all to pieces, Ruin one another, and every one will be making Peace for themselves: So that nothing but the Jealousies and Dissidence one of another, among the Confederates, can give France any Advantage; and I must acknowledge, that I believe the Rumours and Suggestions spread among us here, and among our Confederates abroad, of a Separate Peace made

by England, are rais'd by a Faction, in Favour of France; and however they are Subtilely put into the Mouths of *an Honest Sett of Men*, whose Ignorance rather than Treachery I am willing to blame for it; I doubt not, but it begins among the Friends of France, and the rather, because it can do no Service to any body else.

I wish those honest, but deceived People, would a little Reflect, that such Jealousies, such Surmises, such Reports, so handed about, can be of no use to any but the French — If they knew it, and could prove the Fact, indeed there was no more to be said, and the Discovery would defend them from the Scandal; but as the contrary is most evident, it cannot be promoted now with any other View, but to serve the French, to divide and disunite the Confederates, and rendering them Jealous of one another, break that Concert, that Harmony, that Unanimity of Councils and Demands at a General Treaty, which alone can render the Treaty Successful, and bring France to stoop to Reason.

I was told very Cavalierly Yesterday, That there really was no such Thing; That I had only set up a Man of Straw, and fought with it by myself; That no-body had Suggested that the Peace was privately made; That it was only an Amusement of my own, and the like; now if there were not 20000 Witnesses to be had for the Fact, I should say something to it; nay, if the Suggestions were not Printed and spread among us, and all over Europe, I might find occasion to defend it; but all the Company laugh'd that heard it, except three honest Gentlemen, and they blush'd, for that they had said it themselves, and so that Scare-Crow drop'd of itself; however, I am glad to hear the People so ashame'd of it, as to be willing to deny it and disown it; as to whether it be with a Lye or the Truth, I have nothing to do with that, *they are of Age, ask them.*

The Treaty is now begun, what the Terms shall be, I shall no longer Debate; those

those who have all along pretended the Design is to give great Advantages to France, by which he will be enabled to break out again, and over-run the rest; as they build that Vile Suggestion upon the same Jealousie as they have done the other, viz. of the Peace being made already, so I hope they shall be equally mistaken; and I cannot yet doubt but the Friends of France will be as much Disappointed in this Treaty, as they have been in others, and yet a Door of Peace open'd to France too, if he pleases to accept of it, which will leave that King too considerable, to be contemn'd by any of his Neighbours.

What has Maliciously been Suggested of this Paper, as Arguing for a French Interest, I value not, but can wait that Defence which the Consequence of the Thing will bring with it; my Opinion has been all along, that no Scandalous, Unsafe, Separate or Clandestine Peace, was ever intended by the Queen or the Ministry; but that being willing to End the War, for Reasons, which I cannot say we ourselves have made just; they embrace a Proposal for a Treaty, in which I do believe the French, Wearied and Exhausted, will comply with Good Terms; if I am mistaken, I shall own it when I see it; But what a Debt of Blushes must some People have to pay, if it should appear so, and that no Separate Treaty has really been made, or making, and no Unsafe, Dishonourable Peace intended, but in Concert with, and for the Advantage of all our Allies?

I'll enter no farther into the Terms, the Debates being so near; but in short, this shall be a Good Peace to me while I live, that the present Confederacy United shall agree to be satisfied with, and in especial manner, which the English and Dutch shall Unite to judge Reasonable and Satisfactory to the rest, tho' a single Potentate on Separate Interests, should not appear so willing to be satisfy'd with it as the rest.

And this I say, not that I am for oppressing any single Confederate by the Interest of the rest, but as it is evident, there may be a Confederate who will not be easily Sa-

tisfied, tho' we were, as it is evident there must be a parting of some of the Dominions of a certain Country, not to one or to two, but to several of the Confederates, even by Stipulations already made; I am not at all in doubt, but a certain Prince who will part with nothing he can get, and who would be content to have all Europe fight for him only, may shew some Difficulties at parting with the least Share, tho' it were to purchase the General Peace of all the rest.

I do not say he will do so, but give me leave to justify my Suggestion by this; If the Jesuits who have for so many Years, I might say Ages, had the Ascendant in the Counsels of that Court, prevail All, as they us'd to do, we have not much Reason to expect they will favour the necessary Concessions to any of the Protestant Powers, which may be justly Demanded at this Treaty: Can it be thought the Jesuits would allow any part of the Spanish West-Indies to come into the English Possession? Or that Hereticks, as they esteem us, should be able to set our Feet upon the Sanctify'd Dominions of America? If they do, they must act different from all the Conduct which has made them famous, and must deviate from that Obstinacy, which for so many Years made the Imperial Court inexorable to the Prayers and Tears of the Desolated Hungarian Protestants, with whom no Peace could be obtain'd, tho' at the Intercession of the two Powers, who had but just before saved the Emperor and his whole Dominion from inevitably falling into the Hands of the Elector of Bavaria.

This I cannot but hint Preparatory to what I foresee in the Approaching Treaty, where I do not believe there will be so much difficulty about what shall or shall not be kept in the Possession of France or King Philip, as there will be, about what little Favours ought be expected by Britain, whose Blood and Treasure has gone so far in carrying on the War — Aio for this, Mark the Event, I shall be very glad to be mistaken.

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